



State of Connecticut
SENATE

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March 4, 2014

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee,

I am Senator Michael McLachlan and I am testifying in favor of HB 5387, *An Act Concerning Keno*.

I commend the committee chairs for raising this bill and giving this topic the hearing it deserves. Keno has been referred to as a "misery tax" and "video crack". The keno "deal" was made behind closed doors last year. Keno was never discussed by the appropriate committees, was not included in the legislative budget and was never proposed until the final budget document was made public on the day of the vote. The legislation was apparently preceded by a secret deal to share the profits with Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun.

The keno bill was passed hurriedly, without a public hearing, at the end of the 2013 session. Its passage was really an insult to state taxpayers. They were rendered voiceless.

The authorization of keno would be a bad deal for state residents and bring about a significant expansion of state-sponsored gambling in Connecticut. While I urge the committee to pass this bill and kill keno, I would also urge you to be vigilant on future attempts to balance the state budget through gambling expansions in the form of video slot parlors and Internet gambling. These days, as our government appears more and more determined to double down and promote more gambling, I urge all of my colleagues to not take that bet.

Problem gambling leads to debt, bankruptcies, broken families and crime. We have enough of that here in Connecticut already.

Thank you.

Michael McLachlan
State Senator – 24th District